

REMARKS

Initially, Applicants respectfully acknowledge that the Examiner has indicated that dependent claims 3, 4 and 6 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claims and any intervening claims, and claim 5 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejection under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, and to include all the limitations of the base claims and any intervening claims, .

Claims 1, 2 and 4-6 remain pending in the application. Claim 3 has been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter thereof.

Reconsideration of the rejection and allowance of the pending application in view of the foregoing amendments and following remarks are respectfully requested.

In the Office Action, claim 5 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

In response, claim 5 has been amended to be definite by changing “at a certain interval” to --with an interval--. Thus, the rejection is now believed to be moot.

In the Office Action, claims 1 and 2 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Akihiro, JP 1022225 A. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

In response, claim 1 has been amended to further include all the limitations of claim 3 which is indicated as allowable.

A cleaner of the present embodiment recited in claim 1 includes, inter alia, a suction motor mounted in a main body, and generating a suction force, a filter that

collects dust or filth sucked by the suction force generated at the suction motor, a suction head connected with the filter by a suction pipe, and having an inlet through which dust and filth on a floor are sucked, and a brush rotatably mounted at an inside of the suction head. Further, the inlet is partitioned into a first section and a second section by a belt cover that protects a belt winding around the brush, and a flow passage unit is formed at the brush so that air can flow between the first section and the second section. Furthermore, the flow passage unit includes a reduced-diameter portion where a diameter at opposite sides of a driven pulley around which the belt winds is reduced, respectively, an exposed surface formed at each side of the driven pulley by the reduced-diameter portion, and at least one flow passage penetrating the exposed surface.

Although Akihiro discloses a vacuum cleaner provided with a rotary brush to prevent returning of dust to a carpet, Akihiro does not teach or suggest the flow passage unit including a reduced-diameter portion where a diameter at opposite sides of a driven pulley around which the belt winds is reduced, respectively, an exposed surface formed at each side of the driven pulley by the diameter-reduced portion, and at least one flow passage penetrating the exposed surface, as the Examiner has indicated.

Independent claim 1 is now in condition for allowance in view of the amendments and the above-noted remarks. Dependent claims 2, and 4-6 are also submitted to be in condition for allowance in view of their dependence from the allowable base claims and also at least based upon their recitations of additional features of the present invention. It is respectfully requested, therefore, that the rejections under 35 U.S.C. 103(b) and 35 U.S.C. 112 be withdrawn and that an early indication of the allowance thereof be given.

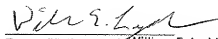
Any amendments to the claims which have been made in this amendment, and

which have not been specifically noted to overcome a rejection based on prior art, should be considered to have been made for a purpose unrelated to patentability, and no estoppel should be deemed to be attached thereto.

Based on the above, it is respectfully submitted that this application is now in condition for allowance, and a Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.

Should the Examiner have any questions or comments regarding this response, or the present application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,  
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